

Sheldon "Shelly" Bernard Matthees, 76, of Bella Vista, Ark., passed away peacefully while hunting in the woods near Leech Lake, Minn., on Nov. 8, 2012. Shelly was born Aug. 25, 1936, in St. Paul, Minn., the son of Bernard and Marie Pogalz Matthees.

He was raised in Owatonna, Minn., and in St. Paul, where he graduated from Concordia High School in 1954. He began studies in the Lutheran ministry at Concordia College. After leaving Concordia, he worked as a lineman for Northwestern Bell, and he remained with "Ma Bell" for 30 years, eventually working as an engineer and a chemical-dependency counselor. After retiring from Northwestern Bell, he continued working in the [chemical dependency](#) field for the next 12 years.

In 1997, he moved to Bella Vista, Ark., where he continued to care for people through his work in [Alcoholics Anonymous](#). Shelly was a friend of Bill W. and had just celebrated 39 years of sobriety on Nov. 5. He was always willing to share a cup of coffee and to listen. He was a positive, healing force in many lives.

He was married to his loving wife, Emily, who shared his deep love of the North Country for 35 years. This year was Shelly's 64th year of hunting in the woods near Leech Lake. He passed away peacefully doing what he loved most.

Shelly is survived by his wife of 35 years, Emily Matthees; his children, Michelle Matthees (Julie Gard), Shana Wenger, Kathi (David) Koester and Douglas (Angela) Matthees; close family friend, Marshall Pearson; 10 grandchildren; his siblings, Carol (Earl) Schroeder, Douglas (Carole) Matthees and Katherine (John) Longman; many nieces, nephews and cousins; and his loyal dog, Jack.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

A memorial service will be Saturday, Nov. 17, 2012, at 11 a.m. at Bella Vista Community Church in Bella Vista.